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Citation for published version:

McKinstry, B 2018, 'Cutting prescriptions for over the counter drugs affects the poorest in society', *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*, vol. 361, pp. k1874. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k1874>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1136/bmj.k1874](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k1874)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Published In:

British Medical Journal (BMJ)

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LETTERS

SIXTY SECONDS ON ... DANDRUFF

Cutting prescriptions for over the counter drugs affects the poorest in society

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Ending prescriptions for conditions like dandruff,¹ athletes foot, and mouth ulcers because people can buy them readily over the counter may seem like an easy win. But not everyone can buy these treatments readily. Universal credit amounts to less than £75 (€86; \$105) a week. Are we really going to force the very poorest in society to give up a substantial amount of their limited income or expect them to live with flaky scalps and itching toes? Even £5 is a lot for people in this situation. Those who pay prescription charges in England will choose to buy over the counter because it is cheaper. The poor are exempt from these charges. This seems a sensible way to keep things.

Simon Stevens, chief executive of NHS England, says that we should “think like a patient, act like a taxpayer.” We should also think with some humanity.

Competing interests: None declared.

1 Kmiotowicz Z. Sixty seconds on ... dandruff. *BMJ* 2018;361:k1557. 10.1136/bmj.k1557 29636331

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